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Pulau Penyengat : Nineteenth Century Islamic Centre of Riau

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Modern Penyengat

The tiny island of Penyengat lies directly opposite Tanjung Pinang, the main town of Bintan island, in the Province of Riau, Indonesia. It is less than 2 kilometres long, about 3/4 kilometre across at its widest point, and paths allow easy and quick access to its kampongs, graves and historical remains. In 1982 its population was 1 938. Small outboard motor boats ferry passengers to and from Tanjung Pinang, and even in choppy seas the journey takes only about twenty-five minutes. Nowdays most of the Penyengat people are employed in Tanjung Pinang, some in government service, and the Penyengat children cross daily to go to school. Tourists who pass through Tanjung Pinang are attracted to visit Penyengat when they see, across the water, the bright-yellow mosque on the little island. It is an obvious landmark, and was recently repainted by the people of Penyengat in what they say is its original colour. When they reach Penyengat tourists are escorted around the island by willing locals, who have erected a sign-

* Much of the material for this article was gathered during a fieldtrip to the area in 1983-84 made with Dr Vivienne Wee of the National University of Singapore. I thank the Faculties Research Fund of the Australian National University for making the trip possible. Our chief informant and mentor during that time was Raja Hamzah Yunus of Penyengat and I thank him for his patience and generosity. The map which accompagnies this article is based on one he prepared. Dr Wee took many of the photographs reproduced here. Her unpublished PhD thesis is a pioneering work on Riau which I refer to often and I thank her for generously sharing her wide knowledge of Riau with me.

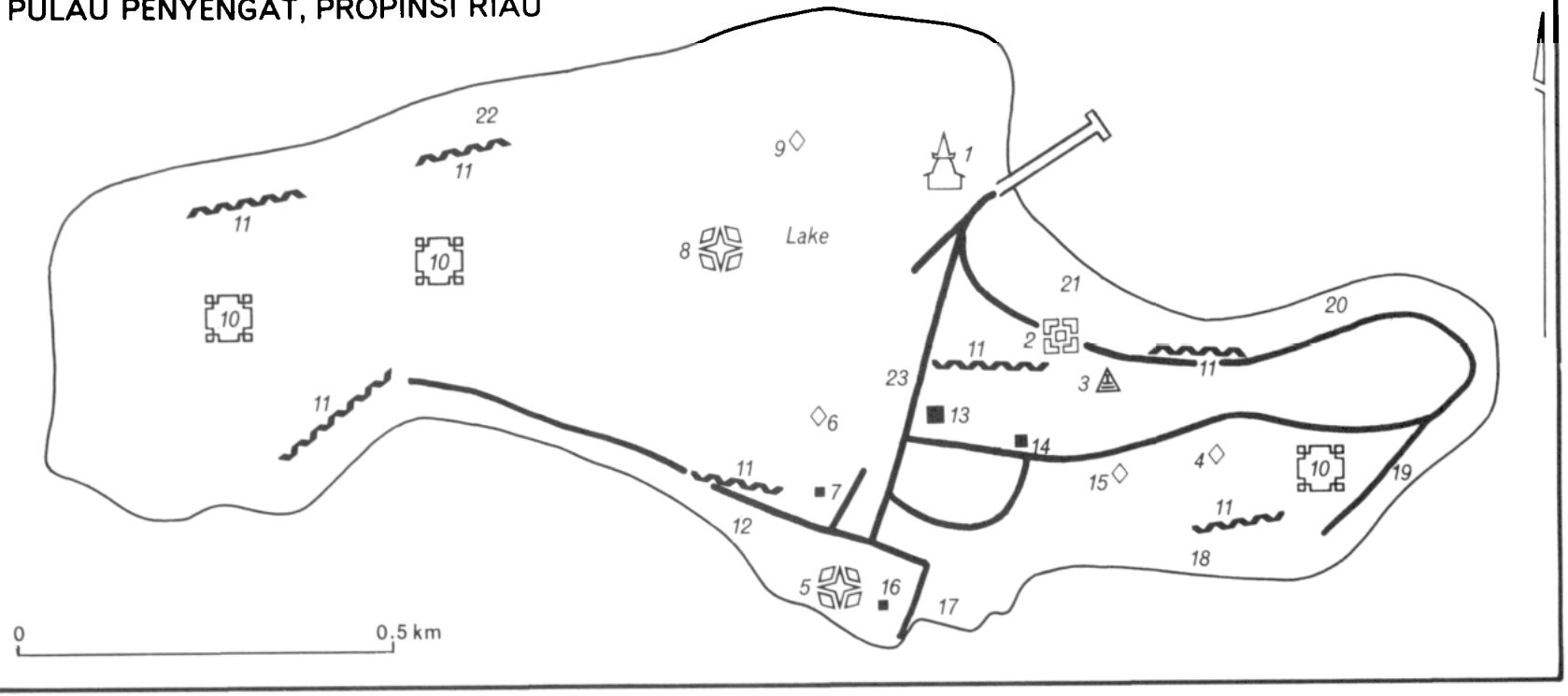
board which gives directions to the main historical remains. The local people have also laid a concrete path around the island for the convenience of visitors. Raja Hamzah Yunus, Raja Ibrahim Sulaiman and Raja Haji Abdul Rahim Mansor have established a foundation known as Yayasan Kebudayaan Indera Sakti to promote and preserve the buildings and documents which bear witness to Penyengat's past history. To explain Penyengat's history they have produced a booklet, *Petunjuk Peninggalan-Peninggalan Sejarah di Pulau Penyengat* with a map which identifies and describes Penyengat's historical sites.

Historical Development

Although Penyengat was not settled until the early 19th century, its position off-shore from Tanjung Pinang, and not far from the entrance to the Riau river (which leads to the 17th and 18th century Riau-Johor capitals) made it strategically important, and it is mentioned in *Tuhfat-Al-Nafis* as a look-out post during the Malay-bugis wars with Raja Kecik (1). It was also the site of land and sea battles between Raja Kecik and the Bugis in 1721 (2) and 1753 (3). The island was again used as a defence post for the Riau capital during a Dutch attack in 1783. On that occasion the Dutch force found Penyengat and Tanjung Pinang too well defended and they withdrew back to Melaka (4). The map of Penyengat (see opposite) shows the position of ditches and defence works all around the island's perimeter and it seems most likely that they date from the time of this war against the Dutch. The defence work on the eastern side of the island (see 10 on the map) was built, the people of Penyengat say, from coral. Much of the coral has since been dug out, and used by the locals in the building of their houses (5).

The history of Penyengat as a site of permanent settlement begins only in 1804. The circumstances of its settlement are recorded in Raja Ali Haji's *Tuhfat al-Nafis* and remembered in the oral traditions of the Penyengat Rajas today (6). The story of 19th century Penyengat begins with Raja Haji who died fighting the Dutch at Melaka in 1784. Raja Haji was the fourth Bugis Yang Dipertuan Muda *(YTM)* of Riau, son of the second *YTM* Daeng Cellak and a Malay princess (see genealogy). Raja Haji is celebrated in written and oral tradition as a fearless warrior (he fought in Inderagiri, Kedah, and Pontianak as well as twice against the Dutch) and the *YTM* responsible for an age of unrivalled commercial prosperity in Riau (7). His piety and devotion to Islam is documented in *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, where he is described as facing the final Dutch attack on his stockade at Melaka with his dagger in one hand and a book of prayers in the other. He is considered as a *syahid*, a martyr who died in Allah's Holy War, and he was buried with proper ceremony within the fort of Melaka (8). Even during his lifetime Raja Haji was widely regarded as a *keramat hidup*, a living saint. (9)

PULAU PENYENGAT, PROPINSI RIAU



1. *Mosque*
2. *Remains of royal medical centre*
3. *Mausoleum of Engku Puteri*
4. *Grave of Raja Haji, Yamtuan Muda IV*
5. *Remains of palace of Sultan Abdul Rahman Shah*
6. *Grave of Raja Jaafar, Yamtuan Muda VI*
7. *Tengku Bilik's house*
8. *Remains of palace of Raja Ali, Yamtuan Muda VIII*
9. *Grave of Raja Abdul Rahman, Yamtuan Muda VII*
10. *Defence works*
11. *Ditches or defence works*
12. *Kota Rentang*
13. *Site of Rusydiyah Club building*
14. *Bukit Bah Yah, site of Raja Ali Kelana's residence*
15. *Grave of Embung Fatimah*
16. *Site of one of the houses of Engku Aji Lah*
17. *Sekolah Negeri site*
18. *Kampung Kelang*
19. *Kampung Cina*
20. *Kampung Datuk*
21. *Kampung Jambat*
22. *Kampung Bulang*
23. *Kampung Tengah*

After Raja Haji's death, a new *YTM* was appointed and Raja Haji's fatherless children came under the care of the Malay Sultan of Riau, Sultan Mahmud. Particularly prominent were his eldest son, Raja Jaafar, Raja Ahmad (father of Raja Ali Haji, author of *Tuhfat al-Nafis*) and one of his daughters, Raja Hamidah whose title was Engku Puteri. All three are closely linked with Penyengat.

In 1804 Sultan Mahmud married Raja Hamidah. He ordered that the island of Penyengat, which at that time had only four or five houses on it, be cleared and that a royal residence with fortifications, a mosque, and an audience hall be constructed *(berbuatlah istana serta dengan kota-paritnya dengan mesjid balai rongnya)* (10). When the work was completed the Sultan installed his wife with her nobles and princes on the island. He later bestowed Penyengat on her, in the following way :

> « Raja Hamidah adalah sahaya membuat Pulau Penyengat ini dijadikan negeri sudah cukup dengan istananya serta dengan kota-paritnya. Maka Raja Hamidahlah yang sahaya buatkan jadi miliklah kepada Raja Hamidah. Syahadan lagi daripada pasal negeri Riau ini daripada hasil-hasilnya dan lain-lainnya yaitu jadi milik makanan Raja Hamidahlah adik-beradik yaitu segala putera Raja Haji al-Marhum fi sabil Allah. Maka tiadalah saya campur lagi barang suatunya.» (11)

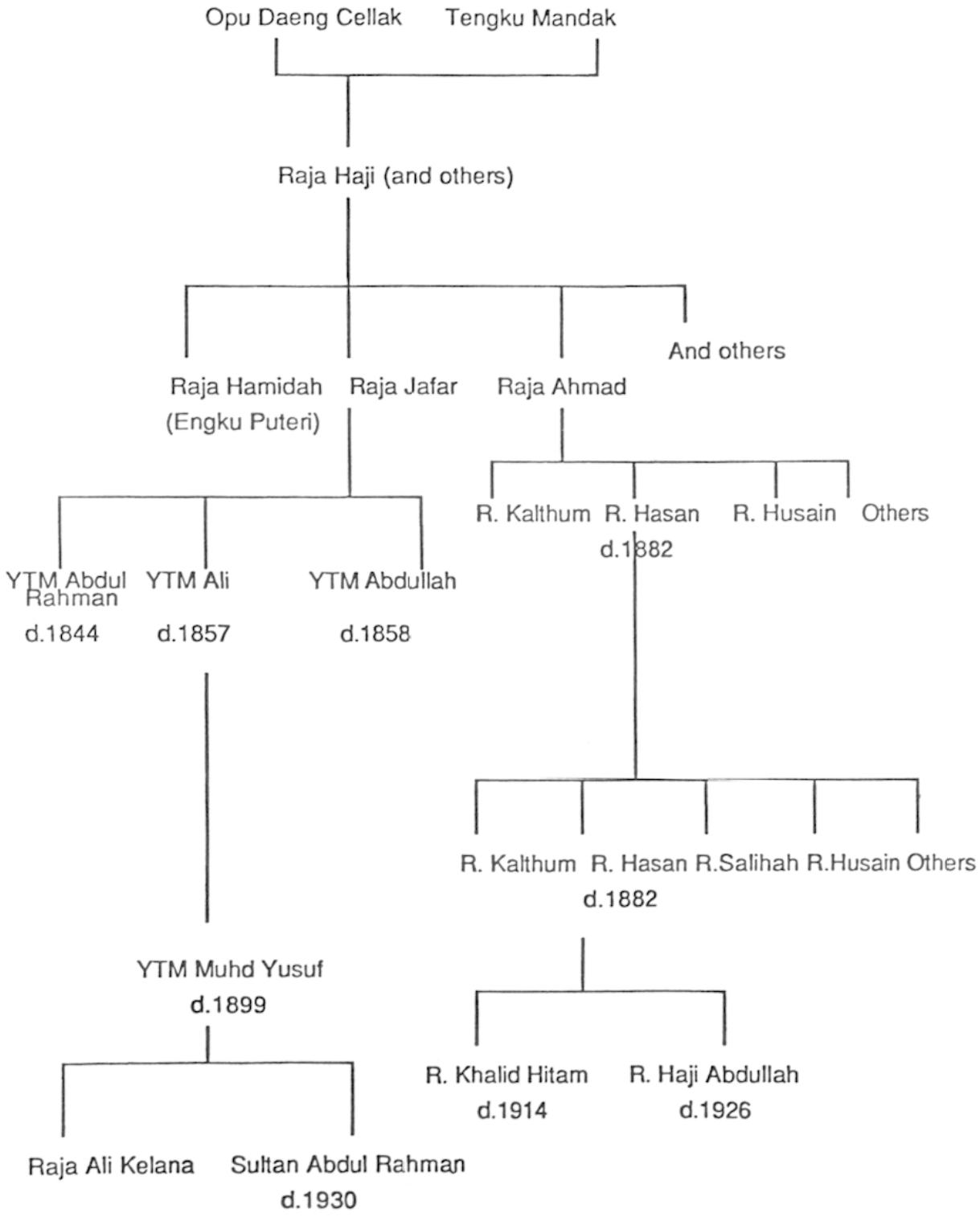
The sultan clearly states that by bestowing Penyengat on Raja Hamidah and the descendants of Raja Haji, he is dividing his kingdom into a Bugis area, and a Malay area. The bugis *YTM* would administer Riau, that is the islands of Bintan and Penyengat and their dependencies, while the Malay Sultan would rule Lingga and its dependencies, with each having no claim to the revenues of the other.

Shortly after this the old *YTM* died, and in 1806 or 1807, Raja Hamidah's brother, Raja Jaafar was called from his fief in Selangor to become *YTM* and live on Penyengat. Raja Hamidah's other brother Raja Ahmad returned also, and both built residences near Raja Hamidah in the area known as her settlement, and called Kota Rentang (12) (see map). Penyengat was Raja Hamidah's own property (13), but it was administered by her brother Raja Jaafar, and later by his sons (see genealogy). Her other brother, Raja Ahmad, was her companion and an adviser to *YTM* Jaafar, and Raja Ahmad's descendants were the religious teachers, scholars and writers of Penyengat (see genealogy).

Raja Haji had been killed by the Dutch at Malacca, but his grave is on Penyengat. According to the *Tuhfat al-Nafis* some years after his burial at Malacca (presumably after 1804), Raja Haji's sons took his body back to Penyengat and buried it at its present site (14) (see map n°4). Informants on Penyengat say that when re-sited on Penyengat many people wished to visit Raja Haji's grave, but the Dutch would not permit this. The people

GENEALOGY

Raja Haji and Descendants



overcame this by placing the grave of a revered Muslim scholar, Habib Shaykh, [15] near that of Raja Haji, so that the latter's grave could be visited without arousing the suspicions of the Dutch [16]. When in 1804 Sultan Mahmud bestowed Penyengat on Raja Hamidah and then officially demarcated his kingdom into the Sultan's (Malay) and the *YTM*'s (Bugis) spheres, he provided *YTM* Jaafar with the opportunity to make Penyengat the centre of the kingdom. The opportunity was taken up by Raja Jaafar and his successors, who deliberately worked to make the island the administrative, religious and mystical heart of the Riau-Lingga area [17].

Let us describe the development of Penyengat from the time of *YTM* Jaafar until the abolition of the Riau-Lingga sultanate in 1913. The reconstruction of this period will draw on material from *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, and oral traditions about Penyengat's past gathered during fieldwork there in early 1984 [18].

Historical Remains

On Penyengat today, the busy, active side of the island is the northern area, particularly around the landing jetty near the mosque (n°1 on map), which is the place where boats from Tanjung Pinang unload their passengers. This does not reflect the pattern of Penyengat's development. Kota Rentang, the settlement built by Sultan Mahmud for Raja Hamidah, is on Penyengat's southern coast, and it was originally this side of the island facing away from Tanjung Pinang and towards the open sea, which was the main landing place and central area of activity [19]. At a later date the Dutch insisted that all comings and goings to Penyengat should be visible to them from their post at Tanjung Pinang, and so the focus of the island shifted to the mosque side.

There is little visible evidence today of the buildings which formed Kota Rentang, though in 1804 Sultan Mahmud had ordered the construction of a residence, mosque and defences, and when Raja Hamidah moved to Penyengat she was accompanied by a substantial retinue. She was soon joined by her brothers *YTM* Jaafar and Raja Ahmad who built their residences close to hers, all within the area of Kota Rentang.

Under *YTM* Jaafar, and certainly by the time of Sultan Mahmud's death in 1812, Penyengat was the administrative centre of the Riau area. The *Tuhfat* notes that all the major Bugis princes were living on the island at that time [20]. *YTM* Jaafar evidently had resources and influence, for the *Tuhfat* describes his patronage of Quranic recitations and his encouragement of foreign visitors, especially Arabs, to Penyengat. He had a guard of honour which he provided with guns and uniforms and drilled himself, and he also had a small military and which he sent to Melaka for Dutch

training [21]. Clearly Penyengat was no sleepy backwater but a centre in touch with Melaka and other nearby areas.

By 1823 Penyengat was fully equipped to conduct royal ceremonies. The belated installation of Sultan Abdul Rahman, successor to Sultan Mahmud, was conducted on Penyengat in an audience hall bedecked with canopied curtains and overflowing with Malay, Bugis and Dutch officials [22]. After the ceremony the Dutch arranged entertainment in the form of musical items and a mock battle [23].

YTM Jaafar died in 1831, after a reign of twenty-six years, during which he had succeeded in establishing Penyengat as the administrative centre of Riau and had attracted many religious scholars. *YTM* Jaafar was buried near Kota Rentang (see n°6 on map), and possibly near the mosque built in 1804, of which no trace now remains. Raja Hamzah Yunus gives his posthumous title as Marhum Kampung Ladi, after the name of the Kampung near which he was buried.

Informants on Penyengat today recall an old story that before the existing mosque was built (it was begun in the mid 1840s) many of Penyengat's population used to pray at graves on the island and even use them as sites for the Friday prayers [24]. After the new mosque was completed, the *YTMs* forbad the people to do this.

What graves were the people praying at? The grave sites which are still considered *keramat* (miracle-working) on Penyengat are those of Engku Puteri (Raja Hamidah), Raja Haji, *YTM* Jaafar, and Habib Shaykh. They are described in Malay as *makam* rather than *kubur* to emphasize that they are different from ordinary graves [25]. Habib Shaykh's grave, it was noted earlier, was placed near Raja Haji's so that supplicants or worshippers could visit Raja Haji's without Dutch disapproval. Engku Puteri died in 1844 and the *Tuhfat* says that her brother Raja Ahmad buried her in her Fort (that is at Kota Rentang) and constructed a *kubbah* (domed structure) [26]. This location of Raja Hamidah's (Engku Puteri's) grave near Kota Rentang does not accord with the site currently known as Engku Puteri's grave (see n° 3 on map). We shall discuss this below.

The four graves recognized as *keramat* on modern Penyengat would have all been there by 1845 (presuming that Habib Shaykh died before Engku Puteri, see footnote 15). It seems very likely that it was these same four graves which attracted worshippers [27] in the first half of last century, particularly since a cult seems to have developed around Raja Haji [28] and been associated also with his son (Jaafar) and daughter (Hamidah). I shall also return to this point below.

Raja Jaafar was succeeded by Raja Abdul Rahman the first of his three sons to follow him as *YTM*.Between them these three brothers ruled

Penyengat and Riau for another twenty-six years and consolidated the position of the island as a leading religious centre. It was *YTM* Abdul Rahman (who ruled 1831-1844) who initiated the building of the mosque (29) which is still such a prominent landmark on Penyengat.

The mosque is 19.8 metres long, 18 metres wide and is supported inside by four pillars constructed from a mixture of sand, gravel and cement (30). There are four minarets (each reached by a steeply winding staircase) and on the roof 13 cuppolas, some four-sided, some six-sided and others eight-sided. According to local accounts (31) the entire population of Penyengat, both men and women, worked together to form a raised section of land on which the mosque could be built. Plate 1 in Matheson and Andaya 1982, shows clearly how high the mosque stands above ground level and must be reached by a graceful flight of 13 steps. Another widely told story is that egg whites were mixed with the lime to strengthen the cement of the cuppolas, minarets and certain other parts of the mosque (32).

The Penyengat mosque faces Tanjung Pinang and was probably one of the first major buildings on the island to be sited away from the Kota Rentang area. Raja Jaafar's sons also built their residences on the mosque side of the island. *YTM* Abdul Rahman's grave (see n°9 on map) is only a few hundred metres behind his mosque, set on the slope of a hill and surrounded by a decorated wall, currently in bad repair (33). This *YTM* is remembered (34) for his good works and his construction of the mosque, whose site, in full view of the Dutch fort at Tanjung Pinang, must have been carefully chosen. *YTM* Abdul Rahman was learned and pious (35) and just as it was probably he who forbad the Penyengat people to worship and hold services at graves, he probably also sited his moque to stand as an Islamic challenge to the kafirs across the water.

When *YTM* Abdul Rahman died in 1844 the mosque was not fully completed, but his brother Raja Ali who succeeded him and ruled from 1844-1857, finished its construction (36). *YTM* Ali was given the beautiful chandelier which still hangs in the mosque (37). *YTM* Raja Ali is remembered for his strict attitude to the practice of Islam. He is said to have ordered all the officials on Penyengat to study religion and improve their recitation of the Quran, and he paid visiting religious scholars to instruct them. Women were to be veiled. He forbad gambling, cockfighting, the mixing of unmarried men and women and the wearing of gold or silk. Pirates and evil doers were severely punished. He commanded that his people pray daily and even instituted a dawn watch to ensure that people rose for the *subuh* prayer (38). Under *YTM* Raja Ali, the Naksybandiyyah *tarikat* became popular on Penyengat, with all the princes studying mysticism (39). In keeping with his exhortation to live simply, *YTM* Ali asked to be buried without

the customary pomp of a royal funeral. He was thus the first ruler, Malay or Bugis, from Riau to have a simple burial, beside his father *YTM* Jaafar [40], and he was known posthumously as Marhum Kantor.

YTM Raja Ali's residence (see n°8 on map), not far from the new mosque, was not a simple structure. Now only its ruins remain, but its walls, steps and an imposing arched entrance (see Plate 3 in Matheson and Andaya's translation of *Tuhfat al-Nafis*) indicate the size and grandeur of the building. The recreation and bathing areas for his wives and daughters are still identifiable. In front of this residence, informants say there was a 'perigi suluk' (a well for *tarikat* use), which members of the *tarikat* used before their meetings (this was probably the *mandi taubat*).A small building nearby, of which there is now no trace, was used for the brotherhood's meetings and ceremonies. Raja Hamzah Yunus [41] characterizes *YTM* Raja Ali's reign as one of extremely rapid physical development for Penyengat. It is true that buildings on the scale of Raja Ali's palace were not built on the island again until the beginning of the present century when Sultan Abdul Rahman commissioned his large residence, but a small flurry of construction activity did occur later in the century, in the 1880s to 1890s.

YTM Raja Ali was succeeded by his brother Raja Abdullah, who reigned only one year, from 1857 to 1858. Raja Abdullah like his predecessor, was a devoted member of the Naksybandiyyah *tarikat* [42]. By the mid-1850s Penyengat was regarded as a well ordered and attractively settled centre. Contemporary Dutch accounts [43] describe the beauty of the island. It had a considerable population and observers comment on the pretty white mosque and *YTM* Ali's imposing stone residence.

Raja Muhammad Yusuf was the next *YTM*. He came to the position as a young man in 1857 and enjoyed a reign of forty-two years. His son was the last Sultan of Lingga, and after Muhammad Yusuf's death in 1899, he absorbed the position of *YTM* and merged it with the sultanate. *YTM* Muhammad Yusuf spent much of this time on the island of Lingga where he had a residence at Robat and where he was later buried [44]. It was during this *YTMs* reign that the division of the Riau kingdom into Riau-Penyengat (Bugis) and Lingga (Malay) spheres began to be blurred. When Sultan Sulaiman of Lingga died in 1884 he was succeeded by *YTM* Muhammad Yusuf's wife Embung Fatimah (herself the daughter of a Sultan). She reigned for two years until her son, Abdul Rahman was installed as Sultan [45]. Embung Fatimah is buried on Penyengat (see n°15 on map) but her husband's grave is on Lingga. If the Malay-Bugis division of the kingdom had been maintained their burial sites should have been reserved. During his lifetime *YTM* Muhammad Yusuf travelled frequently between Penyengat and Lingga.

On Penyengat he became leader of the Naksybandiyyah *tarikat* and began to collect books for a huge library. He purchased from India, Cairo, Mecca and Medina and the 500 or so religious books still stored in the Penyengat mosque are what remain of his valuable collection (46). Like his immediate predecessor, *YTM* Muhammad Yusuf's residence on Penyengat was built near the mosque.

In the early 1880s an Islamic study club, the Rusydiyah Club, was established on Penyengat. Intending members had to produce a piece of writing to prove their suitablity for membership and the Club had its own press which printed members' works and religious texts (47). The Club's building was sited mid-way between the mosque and Kota Rentang, and though nothing physicaly remains of it, the site is now sign-posted (see n°13 on map).

At about the same time two recreational areas were developed on the island. The local people tell of a lake which used to exist in the centre of the island and was used for fishing. The Dutch however had it drained as an anti-malaria measure. On the southern side of the island, east of Kota Rentang, between n°s 17 and 18 on the map was a 'taman pantai', a beach park (48). Local informants say it was built by Raja Ali Haji's son, Raja Hasan, for his grandchildren. It was equipped with swings and plaster boats and horses for children to play on.

Penyengat people today regard the last years of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th as Penyengat's golden age. At that time the people of the island were said to be prosperous and there were no poor. The population estimates (49) for that period seem exaggerated, but provide a comparative estimate of the demographic density of Penyengat : Penyengat had 9 000 people, while Tanjung Pinang and Daik-Lingga each had 4 000. The sources of wealth for the people of Penyengat are difficult to identify, but several of the Penyengat Rajas owned property in Singapore, had mining concessions in the Riau archipelago and were involved in business ventures (50). The three surviving buildings on Penyengat from this period reflect the prosperity of the time and European influence on the local architecture.

The first of these buildings is the house of Engku Haji Daud (a half-brother (51) of Raja Ali Haji ?) who was physician to the Rajas of Penyengat. The building, whose outer walls still stand, is two-storeyed, of brick and with large windows. It is not far from the mosque. In a much better state of preservation is the former residence of Tengku Bilik, so named informants say, because she spent most of her time in her room. The house is well preserved because it later became the residence of a Dutch Controleur and was inhabited up to the time of World War II. Tengku Bilik was

a younger sister of the last Lingga Sultan, Abdul Rahman. Her residence is two-storeyed and of brick (52), situated near her brother's palace (see n°7 on map).

There are no visible remains of the Penyengat palace (53) of Sultan Abdul Rahman, last Sultan and eleventh *YTM* of the kingdom of Riau-Lingga. There is however, an artist's impression of the palace which now hangs in the Museum Kandil Riau, Tanjung Pinang. The building is said to be of the same design as the Dutch Resident's house in Tanjung Pinang. In front of the palace was a cleared area, or *alun-alun*, and a *balai* (one side of which was for the *nobat*, the other for a band), a banyan tree and two flag-poles (for the Dutch and Riau flags). One indication of the modernity of this new period of construction on Penyengat is the presence in 1909 of electricity and several telephones on the island.

Penyengat's hey-day was not long-lasting. In 1911 Sultan Abdul Rahman was deposed by the Dutch for not co-operating with their administration. The Sultan and most of the Penyengat Rajas migrated to Singapore, where the Sultan died and was buried in 1930. In 1913 the Dutch officially abolished the kingdom of Riau-Lingga. When the Penyengat people on the island and in Singapore, learned of this, they feared the Dutch would confiscate all their Penyengat property. It is said that rather than allow this to happen, the Penyengat Rajas took, sold, or destroyed everything of value in their homes. This explains why so little remains today.

Penyengat's Centres

The island of Penyengat saw itself, and was viewed by others, as a royal centre. In the latter part of the 19th century it was sometimes referred to as 'Pulau Inderasakti' (the name now taken by the Yayasan of Raja Hamzah Yunus). 'Indera' means 'royal' and 'sakti' means 'supernatural power', both of which represent the main elements of the island's past still evident from its historical remains. As well, earlier in the 19th century, Penyengat's epithet was 'Serambi Mecca' or'Gateway to Mecca' and people living in the Riau area would visit Penyengat before embarking on the pilgrimage to Mecca.

It might be thought that a centre with the name 'Indersakti' would have adopted some of the symbols of 'the royal garden' *(taman sari)* as described by Brakel (54). One of the clearest examples of such a garden was the 'Taman Ghairah' of Iskandar Thani of Aceh, whose gate, walls, river, cave and mountain were a microcosm of Indera's heaven. None of these elements however, appear in a combined form within a defined area on Penyengat. If we look for patterns, or combinations of symbolic elements on Penyengat we form a quite different picture.

When we study the map of Penyengat it is clear that only half the island

on the eastern part, has been used for settlement. The western half, besides several kampongs on the northern periphery, consists of defence works and fortifications. On the eastern side the modern paths, which probably follow the original paths laid down last century, intersect the area and divide it into the following parts, listed chronologically in order of development.

1. Kota Rentang, associated with Raja Hamidah (Engku Puteri), *YTM* Jaafar and Raja Ahmad.
2. Raja Haji's grave.
3. The present mosque : associated with the three sons of *YTM* Jaafar who became *YTMs*.
4. Engku Puteri's grave complex, near which Raja Ahmad and Raja Ali Haji are buried.
5. *YTM* Raja Ali's palace and its associated *perigi suluk* (for *tarikat* ablutions).
6. The Rusydiyyah Club and Bukit Bah Yah, home of its most prominent member, Raja Ali Kelana.
7. The *taman pantai* area, near Kampung Kelang, developed by Raja Ali Haji's son, Raja Hasan, and around which Raja Ali Haji's descendants settled. (Note that they lived on the southern, Kota Rentang side of Penyengat, as their ancestor Raja Ahmad had).
8. The palace complex of Sultan Abdul Rahman, which under the 1804 division of the Riau-Lingga kingdom, should not have been built on Penyengat. Note that this palace is sited away from the mosque, and away from the residences of the earlier *YTMS*.

1) Al-Ghazali and Kingship : The Mosque and *Tarikat*

When we look among these 8 areas for one which was consistently a centre of temporal power (e.g. a royal residence, in the tradition of the Javanese *kraton*), we find none. Each *YTM* had his own residence, which after his death did not remain the centre. The enduring focus of Penyengat was undoubtedly its mosque. The *tuhfat al-Nafis* continually emphasises Penyengat's status as a centre of Islamic scholarship and an area ruled by *YTMs* who were devout Muslims. In quite specific terms the *Tuhfat* describes the pious behaviour of these *YTMs*. The presentation of these qualities is remarkably similar to the al-Ghazali's description of the ideal ruler in his *Nasihat al-Muluk*. We have discussed elsewhere (55) al-Ghazali's influence on Raja Ali Haji's thought and writing and we have here in the *Tuhfat's* portayal of the *YTMs*, another example of that influence.

Compare this summary of al-Ghazali's requirements of a good ruler with a passage from *Tuhfat al-Nafis* describing *YTM* Raja Ali (ruled 1845-1857).

Firstly, al-Ghazali :

« Kingship would remain with him who possessed religion, justice and wisdom. Kings required four qualities, justice, wisdom, patience and self-control *(sharm)*, a statement which al-Ghazali puts in the form of a letter from Yūnān, the legendary wazir to Anūshīrawān. Wisdom was, for al-Ghazālī, an all-embracing quality, from which derived restraint *('iffat)*, courtesy *(adab)*, abstemiousness, trustworthiness, uprightness, self-control, mercifulness, good nature, faithfulness, patience, civility *(Mudārā)* and clemency all of which, he writes, were the qualities of kings.

For the rest, the qualities and actions which al-Ghazāli demands of kings were mainly of an ethical nature. The king was to overcome pride; to imagine himself in the position of the subjects and to do nothing which he would not wish to be done to himself; he should not treat with contempt those who came to him with some need; he was to avoid luxury; and as far as possible to show compassion in all things; and acting in conformity with the *sharī'a* he was to strive to achieve the satisfaction of his subjects, but he was not to seek this contrary to the *sharī'a*...

In keeping with the importance which al-Ghazāli gives to the *'ulamā'* in the *Iqtiṣād al-i'tiqād*, he ranks an eagerness to visit the 'ulamā and to hear their advice as the next most important quality or characteristic of the ruler after justice.» (56)

Then Raja Ali Haji's description of his cousin, *YTM* Raja Ali :

« Furthermore, he delighted in the company of learned men, both respecting and honouring them. Once, when he was acting as Regent on Lingga, he met a learned man from Banjar, Haji Hamin, whom on the advice of his cousin Raja Ali Haji he now brought back with him and to whom he paid an allowance. The Yang Dipertuan Muda revered the wise Lord Haji and would not walk in front of him. He never missed the Friday prayers, remaining humble before Muslim scholars and was most polite and courteous towards his uncles, such as Raja Ismail and Raja Jafar. In the same spirit he was not comfortable sitting on a chair if his seniors were on the ground or if Lord Sayids were present. It was characteristic of him to enjoy having meals with his relatives, who would come to him on a certain day, and likewise he too would visit them in their houses. During his reign he upheld the Islamic faith, attending the mosque on Fridays and ordering women to be veiled.

In the time of Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Ali, many religious scholars came. After consulting his cousin, Raja Ali Haji, he paid their expenses and ordered all state officials to study religion, recite books, and improve their recitation of the glorious Quran. He himself loved the quest for knowledge. His cousin, Raja Ali Haji, selected several learned men, like Sayid Abdullah of Bahrain and others, to settle on Penyengat and teach for a year. When they left they were given 400 to 500 dollars. Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Ali prohibited the wearing of gold or silk; he exiled all miscreants and would no longer tolerate pastimes like gambling and cock fighting, which were forbidden. If a Muslim were

discovered gambling or cock fighting, he was punished accordingly. Even when celebrating the marriages of his own sons he would not permit any gambling or cock fighting. Furthermore, Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Ali abhorred those who indulged in pleasures which lead to loose behaviour between men and women, and those who sang and crooned *pantun* with veiled invitations to adultery. On occasion he sent people to confiscate the lutes played by those who were serenading near the homes of decent folk so that the young would hear no scandal and so that there was nothing unseemly in the state.
All this was done because he benefited from the company of learned men, liked to hear their moral instruction and advice, and took pleasure in listening to moralizing works.» (57)

The *Tuhfat* almost seems to be matching its description of *YTM* Raja Ali's behaviour with al-Ghazali's criteria for the ideal ruler. The parallels are not coincidental for we know that Raja Ali Haji's own treatise on kingship, the *Thamarat al-Mahammah* (written in 1857) bears a close resemblance to al-Ghazali's *Nasihat al-Muluk* (58).

Other aspects of al-Ghazali's theories on the nature of the Islamic state would also have found ready acceptance by Penyengat's *YTM* s. For example al-Ghazali's explanation of the relationship between the *imām*, the sultan, and the *ulamā*, as set out in his *Iqtiṣād al-i'tiqād*, (59) would have seemed very appropriate to the *YTM*s, who fitted very easily into al-Ghazali's description of the *imām's* function. The only way a government could be valid and authorized, al-Ghazali wrote, was through the sultan's recognition of the imām.

« No government other than that of the *imām* was valid under the *sharī'a* and subordinate officials had only delegated authority and not functional authority. The validity of the government of the Sultan was established only upon the sultan's oath of allegiance to the *imām's* appointment of the sultan.

In short, in al-Ghazālī's theory the imamate still stood for the whole of Islamic government, but it had been separated into three main elements, the Imam, the sultan and the *'ulamā'*, each corresponding to some aspect of the authority behind Islamic government and each performing a function required by that authority.» (60)

The *Tuhfat's* description of the relationship between the *YTM* and the Sultan follows al-Ghazali's views on the *imām*-sultan relationship, but the *Tuhfat* adds an ethnic dimension, that of the symbiotic relationship between the Bugis and the Malays. The *Tuhfat's* continued emphasis on the importance of the oath of loyalty between Malays and Bugis, sworn between each new *YTM* and each sultan, highlights that same interdependence between *imām* and sultan that al-Ghazali postulates in his concept of the imamate.

And for the ruler as *imām*, the centre of the kingdom was the mosque.

There is one particular feature of al-Ghazali's *Nasihat al-Muluk* which would have made it very appealing to the Penyengat Rajas. Lambton points out that the *Nasihat al-Muluk* is distinguished from other similar works on kingship (eg. the *Siyāsat Nāma*) by the fact that it is influenced by the Sufi ethic (61). Again, it is from *Tuhfat al-Nafis* that we learn of the importance of *tarikat*, on Penyengat, and that the *YTM*s became the leaders of their brotherhood. They would have appreciated and valued the mystical dimension of al-Ghazali's theories of kingship.

2) Engku Puteri's Grave

The *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, influenced as it is by al-Ghazali's concepts, stresses the importance of the mosque and *tarikats* in 19th century Penyengat. Oral tradition and contemporary practice on Penyengat reveal the continued significance of two *keramat* graves as foci in the lives of the local people. Combining written and oral traditions we find not one, but three centres on the island : the mosque, and the graves of Engku Puteri and Raja Haji. It is not, I would suggest, coincidental that these three centres lie on the same line, or axis (see nos 1,3 and 4 on the map). Earlier we noted that *Tuhfat al-Nafis* stated that Engku Puteri was buried at Kota Rentang. It is possible, but as yet we have no supporting evidence, that after the mosque was built, Engku Puteri's grave was moved (as Raja Haji's had been from Melaka to Penyengat) from Kota Rentang to a different site. The new location was in line with, and equidistant from her father Raja Haji's grave, and the mosque.

It was also noted above that from the early part of the 19th century, graves were important sites on Penyengat, and Raja Jaafar's sons had to forbid worship there and draw the inhabitants to the mosque. Yet the graves, particularly Raja Haji's and Engku Puteri's have remained important sites in modern Penyengat. Dr Wee has analysed the significance of Penyengat's *keramat* graves. She notes that Penyengat, the most 'Muslim' area in the province of Riau, has the highest incidence of *keramat* graves (62). Dr Wee stresses the intermediary and intercessory roles of those whose graves are *keramat*, because they are believed to be able to transmit the prayers of the living to Allah (63). Engku Puteri's grave is visited by those wishing to *berniat* (ask for help, make a wish), and also by people newly arrived on Penyengat, who ask her permission *(minta izin)* as owner of the island, to stay there (64). It is perhaps Engku Puteri's central role as owner of the island which necessitated the removal of her grave from Kota Rentang, to the centre of the inhabited half of Penyengat. To understand the function and importance of Raja Haji's grave we need to consider once again the function of the *YTM*s.

3) Raja Haji and the Cohesive Structure of the Penyengat Community

It has been suggested that there are three ways of structuring and uniting the *umma* (Muslim community). These are, the regular congregation at the mosque, mystical brotherhoods, and the kin or tribal unit (65). The cohesion of the Penyengat community was achieved by the *YTM*s using each of these structures. The mosque provided a central focus not only for the performance of prayers, but also for scholarship, law and administration. It was at the mosque that visiting religious teachers taught the Penyengat officials. The mosque, standing defiantly opposite the Dutch administrative centre of Tanjung Pinang, stood for the strength of the *YTM*s through their devotion to Islam.

Membership of a *tarikat* was actively encouraged by the *YTM*s. After *YTM* Ali joined the Naksybandis the *Tuhfat* records that 'all the princes on Penyengat studied mysticism' (66). The *tarikats* remained strong on Penyengat until at least 1913, and copies of *tarikat* texts are still kept on the island. The twice-weekly meetings of the brotherhood served to strengthen bonds between individuals, as is readily achieved by membership of a select and corporate body. In a similar way the Rusydiyah Club would have united its members through its regular meetings and activities when members would work together towards a common goal.

While spiritual cohesion could be achieved through the *tarikats*, political cohesion, on a much broader scale, was achieved by intermarriage between important families in the Riau kingdom. This was established practice throughout the Malay world and one which the *YTM*s of Penyengat, and their relatives and retainers, also followed. Cross-cousin marriages between the Penyengat rajas were the norm. On Penyengat, because of its particular historical development, the kinship networks were very close. Many of the Penyengat population, indeed the majority of the rajas, traced their ancestry back to the warrior-hero Raja Haji. Penyengat had been bestowed on Engku Puteri, and she was its owner, but it was to belong in perpetuity to the descendants of Raja Haji ('jadi milik makanan Raja Hamidahlah adik-beradik yaitu segala putera Raja Haji al-Marhum fi sabil Allah', *tuhafat al-Nafis* p.212, see above). Raja Haji is regarded as the founding figure and mentor of the island and Engku Puteri was given Penyengat as a gesture to her father. Raja Haji's grave then is of great significance. It is the grave of a holy martyr, of a man renouned for his piety and his exploits, and a man from whom most of Penyengat's nobles, and all its rulers were descended.

The three centres of Penyengat, the mosque and the graves of Raja Haji and his daughter, stand for three very important elements in the island's past. They also symbolise the role of religion, mysticism and kinship which

are elements binding the Muslim community together. The identification of these three centres and the recognition of their significance confirms Raja Ali Haji's description of 19th century Penyengat as a centre of canonical Islam, *tarikats*, and of a closely-knit kinship group. Are these features unique to Penyengat, or are they just more evident because the past is there well documented and still treasured by its modern population? It should be possible to extend this work into the surrounding Malay royal centres, particularly those of east coast Sumatra. Meanwhile, there are still a large number of documents from Penyengat, diaries and administrative records compiled in the early years of this century and preserved by Raja Hamzah Yunus at the Yayasan Inderasakti, which should further elaborate our picture of 19th century Penyengat as an Islamic centre (67).

Conclusion : Penyengat, Pulau Indersakti

We have seen how the *YTM*s of Penyengat, with the help of Raja Ali Haji, used the theories of al-Ghazali to link kingship and religion. Their patronage of the mosque and *tarikat* and their leadership in the two areas, identified the ruler with Islam in both its canonical and mystical aspects. Al-Ghazali's influence on the expression and practice of Islam on Penyengat is demonstrably strong, but more research needs to be done to elaborate the picture fully. Islam also provided the *YTM*s with the three institutions of mosque, *tarikat* and kinship, which they used to strengthen the unity and cohesion of the Penyengat community.

Horizontal bonds were formed between kin groups through intermarriage between Penyengat families. The links meshed contemporaries together. Vertical bonding, linking generation with generation and an individual with an ancestor, were expressed through genealogies. Written genealogies are kept and treasured on Penyengat, and most claim descent from Raja Haji.

Spiritually these links with Raja Haji are maintained through visits *(ziarah)* to his grave. The people of Penyengat have long venerated the graves of Raja Haji and his daughter and earlier last century they may well have rivalled the mosque as centres of spiritual power. These two 'keramat' graves, encapsulate and express the 'sakti' element of Pulau Inderasakti. As founders of the island Raja Haji and Engku Puteri remain sources of spiritual strength and protection for its inhabitants.

A strong symbolic axis runs between the three spiritual centres of Penyengat, from Raja Haji, through Engku Puteri and to the mosque. It is the combination of the elements represented by this axis which offers the key to our understanding of the 19th century world of Penyengat.

NOTES

1. V. Matheson and B.W. Andaya, *The Precious Gift Tuhfat al-Nafis*, Kuala Lumpur, 1982, p.61.
2. *Op.cit.*, p.56-7.
3. *Op.cit.*, p.83.
4. The Malay-Bugis account of this encounter is given in *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, see Matheson and Andaya 1982, pp.168-171. References to Dutch accounts of the incident are given in Matheson and Andaya, 1982, p.366.
5. Fieldnotes, Pulau Penyengat, Jan.1984.
6. Many of the men who live on Penyengat today bear the title Raja. It is understood to be borne by those descended from the Bugis brothers who settled in Riau in the early 18th century. The oral version of the establishment of Penyengat as a royal centre has been recorded and discussed by Dr Vivienne Wee in her unpublished Ph. D. thesis, 'Melayu : Hierarchies of Being in Riau', Australian National University, 1985, pp.202-203.
7. As described in *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, Matheson and Andaya, 1982, pp.160-162.
8. See *op.cit.* pp.175-176.
9. P.C. Hoynck van Papendracht, 'Some Old Private Letters from the Cape, Batavia and Malacca (1778-1788)', *Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 3, (i), 1924, p.22.
10. *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, Matheson and Andaya, p.211, fol.291 :11.
11. The English translation is given in Matheson and Andaya, 1982, p.212.
12. I had previously transcribed this place-name from the Jawi as Kota Ranting, but the people of Penyengat call it 'Rentang'.
13. Wee 1985, p.202 ff. describes how in oral tradition Penyengat is referred to as Raja Hamidah's *mas kawin* because the Sultan bestowed it on her at the time of their marriage. Raja Hamzah Yunus in his booklet *Peninggalan-Peninggalan Sejarah di Pulau Penyengat*, undated, p.10, also refers to Penyengat as Engku Puteri's *mahar* which she received after her marriage to the Sultan.
14. See also Wee 1985, pp.349-50.
15. He was a religious adviser to Raja Hamidah in the 1820's, see Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.238. He is last mentioned in *Tuhfat al-Nafis* as being present at a royal death in 1832, but his own date of death is not recorded.
16. Fieldnotes, January 1984.
17. Some of the Penyengat rajas, modern descendants of Raja Haji, still believe today that Penyengat is, or shoud be, the centre of the Riau area, see Wee 1985, pp.477-9.
18. The fieldtrip was undertaken with Dr Vivienne Wee from the National University of Singapore. Our main informants on Penyengat were Raja Hamzah Yunus, his father-in-law Raja Jantan and Raja Haji Abdul Rahim Mansor.
19. Fieldnotes, January 1984.
20. Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.220.
21. *Op.cit.* pp.220-221.
22. *Op.cit.* p.241.
23. *Op.cit.* p.242.
24. Fieldnotes Jan. 1984 and see Wee 1985, p.342.
25. Dr. Wee discusses this point in her thesis, see p.342 ff.
26. Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.279.

27. Raja Hamzah Yunus, *Peninggalan-Peninggalan Sejarah*, p.13 describes *YTM Marhum* Jaafar's grave as having been very beautiful with pillars, small decorated domes and a pool for ablutions, which implies that it was a place for praying.
28. Among numerous stories which circulated after Raja Haji's death was one which asserted that the Dutch tried to move his body from Melaka for burial at Batavia, but that the ship which was to carry his body exploded killing all on board - see Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.176.
29. Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.279.
30. This information is given by Raja Hamzah Yunus in his *Peninggalan-Peninggalan Sejarah*, p.9.
31. Recorded by Raja Hamzah, *op.cit.* p.9.
32. *Op.cit* p.9 and information provided by Penyengat informants in 1968 and 1984.
33. See *op.cit.* p.14.
34. *Loc.cit.*
35. See Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.279.
36. See Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.283.
37. In Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.284, *kerun* has been mistranslated as 'crown' it shoud be 'chandelier'.
38. *Op.cit.*, pp.283-285.
39. *Op.cit.*, p.285.
40. Raja Hamzah Yunus, *Peninggalan-Peninggalan Sejarah*, p.13.
41. *Op.cit.*, p.14.
42. Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.297-8.
43. For references see *op.cit.*, p.403, Folio 422, note 1.
44. See V. Matheson *'Kisah Pelayaran ke Riau :* Journey to Riau, 1984', *Indonesia Circle*, 36, March 1985, p.12.
45. Embung Fatimah's accession as queen, and the behaviour of her son Abdul Rahman, is a matter of controversy in the local histories of the area. For further details, see V. Matheson, *'Strategies of Survival :The Malay Royal Line of Lingga-Riau', Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* XVII (1) March 1986, p.15ff and Wee 1985, pp.214-220.
46. A catalogue of a large number of these books and some manuscripts has been compiled by M.A. Effendi, Raja Hamzah Yunus *et. al* and is entitled 'Re-Inventarisasi Naskah-Naskah Yang Tersimpan di Mesjid Pulau Penyengat'. Kantor Wilayah Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Propinsi Riau, Bidang Permuseuman, Sejarah dan Kepurbakalaan, June 1981.
47. For further details about the Rusydiyah Club and its members see Abu Hassan Sham, 'Kelab Rusydiah : Sebuah Perkumpulan Cendekiawan Melayu Riau, *Dewan Masyarakat*, June 1979, pp.36-38.
48. This is the name given in Raja Hamzah Yunus 'Peninggalan-Peninggalan Sejarah', p.16.
49. By Raja Hamzah Yunus, fieldnotes January 984.
50. See Barbara Watson Andaya, 'From Rum to Tokyo : The Search for Anticolonial Allies by the Rulers of Riau, 1899-1914' *Indonesia* 24 (10), 1977, p.217.
51. See Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.38.
52. There was a brick factory at this time on the island on Batam which was a venture owned by Sultan Abdul Rahman's half-brother, Raja Ali Kelana. Sayyid Shaykh al-Hadi worked there briefly as its manager. Some of the factory's profits were used to help finance the Singapore magazine *al-Imam.*

53. The remains of Sultan Abdul Rahman's residence in Lingga however, are still evident. For a description of this palace at Damnah-Lingga see V. Matheson, 'Kisah Pelayaran ke Riau', *Indonesia Circle* 36, 1985, p.12.
54. See L.F. Brakel, 'State and Statecraft in 17th century Aceh', *Precolonial State Systems in Southeast Asia*, Monographs of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society N°6, 1975, pp.56-66.
55. B.W. Andaya and V. Matheson, 'Islamic Thought and Malay Tradition : The Writings of Raja Ali Haji of Riau (ca 1809-1870)' in *Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia,* ed. A. Reid and D. Marr 1979, p.116ff.
56. Quoted from Ann K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam*, O.U.P., 1981, pp.119-120.
57. Matheson and Andaya 1982, p.283-4.
58. See further Andaya and Matheson 1979, p.116.
59. See Lambton 1981, p.110ff.
60. *Op.cit.* p.114-115.
61. Ann L.S. Lambton. 'The Theory of Kingship in the Nasīhat ul-Mulūk of al- Ghazālī', in *Theory and Practice in Medieval Persian Government,* London 1980, p.48.
62. Wee 1985, p.324.
63. *Op.cit.* p.331.
64. Described in *op.cit.*, p.343ff.
65. See C.A.O. van Nieuwenhuijze, *The Lifestyles of Islam*, Brill, 1985, p.80-82.
66. Matheson and Andaya 1982 p.285.
67. These documents will be listed and examined in a forthcoming work by Wee and Matheson to be called *Emblems of Identity : An Ethnobibliography of Riau-Lingga.*